

*The DUTY and ADVANTAGES of en-
couraging Public INFIRMARIES.*

A
S E R M O N,
Preached before HIS GRACE
CHARLES Duke of *Richmond*,
Lenox, and *Aubigny*,
P R E S I D E N T;
AND THE
G O V E R N O R S
OF THE
LONDON INFIRMARY,
In GOODMAN'S-FIELDS,
FOR THE
RELIEF of Sick and Diseased MANUFACTURERS,
and SEAMEN in MERCHANT-SERVICE, &c.
AT THE
Parish Church of *St. Mary-le-Bow*,
On FRIDAY, *March 25*, 1743.

Maddox By the Right Reverend Father in God,
ISAAC, Lord Bishop of *St. Asaph*.

Published at the Request of the PRESIDENT and GOVERNORS.

The S E C O N D E D I T I O N.



P S A L M xli. ver. 1.

*Blessed be the man that considereth
the poor, the Lord shall deliver him
in the time of trouble.*

Or, as it is in another translation ;

*Blessed is the man that provideth for
the sick and needy, the Lord shall
deliver him in the time of trouble.*

THIS Psalm, which contains many pathetic arguments for compassion and liberality to the sick and miserable, seems to have been composed when *David* himself had felt the tortures of some painful disease ; and felt them too with an additional vexation, not unlike that which po-

verty often suffers from neglect and contemptuous usage. *Mine enemies*, says he, ver. 5. *Speak evil of me, when shall he die and his name perish.* Such sufferings in his own person naturally excited a quicker sense, a stronger sympathy of the misfortunes endured by those unhappy people, who laboured under any similar distress.

FROM the greatness of this distress, this double distress of sickness and poverty, mentioned in our text, the assistance administered in such calamitous cases, becomes at once more beneficial to the poor sufferer, a fund of greater joy to the liberal benefactor, and a reasonable ground for better hopes of the Divine acceptance and blessing. *Blessed is he that considereth the sick and needy, the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble; the Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon earth, and thou wilt not deliver him into the hand of his enemies,* ver. 1, 2.

A subject that so particularly tends to the honour of our great Creator; to the comfort and benefit of our suffering fellow-creatures; to the ease and delight of every rational mind, well deserves the most attentive regard, while we enquire into the nature, obligation,
and

and recompence of a duty so amiable and excellent.

BLESSED *is the man that* CONSIDERETH *the sick and needy*; the original expression, *considereth* the sick and needy, imports a prudent care in the application of our bounty; a wise and deliberate distribution, entirely different from a rash and thoughtless, though perhaps well-intended, profusion.

THE more difficult it is to distinguish real from pretended objects of charity; and the greater inconveniencies arise from encouraging laziness and debauchery, under the appearance of distress, the more requisite it is to employ the strictest caution, that the clamorous and unworthy may not eat the bread of the poor; nor idleness and imposture riot in that relief, which is justly due to actual want and sickness.

BLESSED *is the man*, says the wise son of SIRACH, *that meditates good things in wisdom*, Eccclus. xiv. 20. And the sacred penman of the text justly observes, *that a good man is merciful and lendeth; he hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor*. But however extensive his beneficence may be, *he will guide his affairs with discretion*.

HAPPY would it be for the race of man, *born to trouble as the sparks fly upward*, if every kind and every case of misery could receive a suitable and full relief ! The most sanguine expectation reaches not so far. And therefore the first, though not the only instance of care should be employed to remove those misfortunes, which are the most immediate and most pressing ; where the greatest benefit arises to each miserable object ; and where the same degree of assistance, the same kind contribution will reach the greatest number of poor sufferers. Charity, the most diffusive, must have its bounds : no liberality can reach every object. Prudence and œconomy therefore will examine and *consider* the case of the poor, that as few as possible be left destitute, or sent empty away.

THESE general principles so naturally lead your thoughts to the good work, which occasions the present solemnity, that it is needless to mention the application.

WE are now assembled in support of an INFIRMARY, in that part of this trading and populous city, where so beneficent a provision is greatly wanted. This INFIRMARY is a charitable foundation, for the relief of seamen in merchant-service, and poor artificers, whom

whom providence is pleased to visit with divers diseases ; and being thus incapacitated for that honest labour, which was their only subsistence, they are no longer able to furnish to themselves either food or physic.

THE mere naming this good design pleads powerfully in its favour, awakens every tender sentiment of pity and compassion, and suggests every argument of humanity, reason, and religion.

FOR this charitable work we are met together in the house of GOD, to acknowledge the Divine goodness in that success which has already appeared ; and to implore his blessing, *from whom cometh every good and perfect gift*, for further assistance and encouragement, for which there are so many importunate demands.

SUCH institutions in general, hospitals and infirmaries, have for many reasons been approved and supported by the best and wisest men.

I forbear to mention, among these reasons, the valuable improvements that are hereby made in medicinal knowledge, for the general good of mankind ; or the most proper instruction of succeeding generations by just observations founded upon real facts ; and the
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best supply of skill and experience, which these seminaries afford to students in this beneficial science. Upon several other accounts these publick receptacles for the sick and diseased stand recommended for their great utility.

INDIGENT sickness, which at home would probably have no advice, or such as frequently proves worse than none, receives in these humane and beneficial foundations all the advantages, which can arise from the knowledge and experience of the most eminent in the honourable and useful professions of physick and surgery.

By this wise and generous assistance, *the poor and the rich meet together*; and the same disorders in both find equal relief from the same skilful hands.

THE art of medicine extends to many considerations, it is by no means therefore depreciating that valuable science to observe, that few cures are effected by physick, by drugs only: proper food, due regimen, necessary attendance, and above all, ease and tranquility of mind have a large share in every recovery. But how can a necessitous sick creature enjoy this ease of mind, when, could he obtain a proper prescription, he has neither money nor
credit

credit to procure the diet or the physick prescribed to him : or, if he could find credit, must dread the sad consequences of incurring debts, that no future industry may satisfy ?

EXPERIENCE has shewed, with melancholy conviction, that the provision made by particular parishes, however burdensome to the inhabitants, is far from affording competent relief to those poor, who labour under sickness and diseases.

IN many instances how slow and imperfect is the cure of these working people, to the detriment of the publick, as well as the inconvenience of private families ? And who can calculate what numbers totally perish, or are disabled for life by the ignorance of unskilful practitioners, or the hardiness of adventurous empiricks ; or sometimes suffer from the mistaken kindness of well disposed neighbours, whose intentions are much better than their skill and knowledge ?

BUT besides these inconveniencies, 'tis impossible to say how large the catalogue may be of destitute, helpless wretches, who having languished a considerable time, after many restless nights and mournful days, half famished, unpitied and unrelieved, suffer the miseries of a lingering death ; and thereby
prove

prove an annual disgrace, as well as loss to their native country !

PAROCHIAL provisions, as was observed, being thus insufficient and inadequate, several publick endowments have interposed to supply the defect.

IN these places, pretended complaints and imposture, which deceive the good nature and inexperience of private persons, far from finding encouragement, are sure to be detected ; and whatever is charitably given, must by this means be effectually and totally apply'd.

NOR is it possible, that any donation should be here perverted to the purposes of idleness, vice and debauchery, where the general relief is administered in no other form, than wholesome food, or well prepared medicines. And when once the cure is effected, the patient is immediately discharged and never allowed to continue an unnecessary incumbrance upon charity.

THIS rule, however, is not so rigidly observed, but that in cases of real necessity, and in such only, persons of known industry and intirely destitute, receive some small assistance, after their recovery, for immediate support, that they may not perish for want of food and raiment, before they can earn them by their usual labour.

AND

AND during their abode in this infirmary just care is taken, at proper seasons, to impress their minds, with a sense of religion ; and improve their vacant hours to those best of purposes, which tend to the greatest advantage thro' the whole extent of their present and future existence.

BUT besides the care that is here employed, both for the bodies and souls of men, 'tis a consideration of much weight, that any assistance thus administered is happily managed as an united fund ; and thereby rendered beneficial to the greatest extent. Were every benefactor to employ the same sum, in a separate way, which he now bestows in common, how very few in comparison could be relieved by these divided pittances ?

SCARCELY credible it is how vast the advantages are, which arise from this united application of charity and benevolence. I speak now only as to the larger extent of charitable gifts thus collected together, and the much greater number of objects that can be relieved in this method of joint contribution ; without considering the better advice, the more regular attendance, and other advantages the distressed receive in this INFIRMARY, which cannot attend any private help.

So that charities thus united, like feeble twigs when bound together, gain new strength, and become not only more certain in the application, but much more beneficial by an extensive influence and operation : every individual is likely to obtain better assistance, and much larger numbers are certainly relieved.

NOR can this consideration appear with greater force than in the happy conduct of that well contrived institution, which is now imploring your assistance ; and the bare mention of such management is sufficient applause.

THIS good design takes its date from the third of *November* 1740, not quite two years and a half ago ; since which time more than five thousand objects have been relieved ; and very near that number of sick and lame and diseased persons have, by the blessing of God, been actually restored to their health and limbs. The whole expence of these numerous cures, including some accidental charges that don't return, amounts to little more than fourteen hundred pounds.

IN a case of this importance it will not, I presume, be thought too minute to enter into a calculation, whereby it appears, that these poor objects, one with another, have received the benefit of a cure, for many grievous

vous complaints, at so small cost as five shillings and seven pence each patient; and in this estimate is included more than three hundred and seventy poor diseased people, who have, as in-patients, been received into the house, and, during their continuance, entirely maintained. Upon another calculation (such is the frugal administration of this charity!) no more than two shillings appears to be the charge of curing the out-patients one with another. What would such scanty sums avail, were there an equal certainty, which cannot be the case, that the whole would be duly employed in separate gifts!

I dwell the longer upon this topic, because it carries such strength of persuasion to encourage a design, made so extensively useful by the most frugal application. Such diffusive œconomy has a double advantage; one, as benefactions are thereby rendered serviceable to a greater number of afflicted people; and another, as it is so powerful an argument for liberality, when it is thus manifestly well employed.

MANY of these circumstances are common to all institutions of this kind, the several Infirmarys and Hospitals, which are an honour and blessing to this metropolis and kingdom; but in the plan now before us,

there appear, in some respects, peculiar generosity and gratitude. This is a scheme that stands distinguished, both in the manner of its execution and the objects that are here relieved; objects that eminently deserve a tender pity and liberal assistance: laborious, useful MECHANICKS, who with close confinement and constant toil, frequently the occasion of their disorders, furnish the various materials of your safety, ease and pleasure: and MARINERS in MERCHANT-SERVICE, the instruments of our commerce, and the source of our wealth, who at the expence of their health, very often at the hazard of their liberty and lives, carry into foreign countries, to the immense profit of their own, all the superfluous and unemployed productions of the soil and labour of this kingdom: and instead thereof import the different produce, both useful and ornamental, of distant climates, for your accommodation and delight; while you remain at home in security and peace.

How entirely is the nation indebted for its riches, glory, strength, and power, to both these classes of useful men; and how justly are their misfortunes intitled to all the relief, which compassion, gratitude, or prudence

dence can recommend ; prudence, I say, because the loss of this rank of people, though by negligence and disregard, like a decay in the very vitals, certainly weakens and destroys the body politic.

AND in those instances, where a closer connection and intercourse appear, where the subsistence and wealth of any person entirely depend upon the advantages he receives from the labour these people undergo, or the dangers they run ; a peculiar obligation arises to pity their misfortunes, and alleviate their misery in want and sickness, by administering to their necessities out of that plenty, which is derived from the sweat of their brows, and the hazard of their lives.

'TIS truly worthy of the wisdom and generosity of a *British* government, to secure an honourable retreat, a comfortable subsistence for those brave and gallant men, who, in defence of the rights and commerce of their country, have not only exposed their lives to the perils of the ocean, to storms, and rocks, and unhealthy climates ; but to all the rage of war !

HIGHLY reasonable it is, that when sailors have endured the pain of grievous wounds, the loss of limbs ; or by long fatigue, and
many

many dangers, have hastened the infirmities of old age ; highly reasonable it is that the remains of a life, so bravely and usefully employed, should be rendered as easy as possible, and find a decent provision without anxiety or care.

BUT the disabled merchant-seaman and sickly manufacturer, however beneficial their employments are to the publick, share not this publick relief : that is devolved upon your more private and necessary charity : and under this benevolent institution they feel its influence in full extent.

THESE charitable doors are always open ; open at every hour of every day ; and open to every sufferer, how low soever reduced. None can be too poor and friendless to be relieved within these hospitable walls ; no expence, no charge at their admission ; nor any security required against future contingencies.

THIS distinction is not meant to suggest a misconduct in any other charitable foundations ; where long experience has convinced the world of an affectionate and successful concern for miserable objects.

BUT yet, 'tis impossible for *human nature* not to wish, that, upon re-considering this matter, some harmless expedient may be found,
that

that the most extreme poverty may no more be an argument against relief under severe diseases; nor the doors of an hospital any longer shut against a perishing wretch, because he is entirely destitute of friends and money.

HOWEVER small a demand may be, if it exceeds the power of him that is obliged to satisfy that demand, no doubt it becomes too heavy and therefore considerable. Though the number of such refusals may not be very great; yet the settled condition of admittance being well known, may discourage many attempts, that don't appear: weak, sickly people will hardly undergo the fatigue of crawling to the gate of an hospital, only to be refused entrance. And very unhappy it is, that this refusal is grounded singly upon friendless poverty, upon that extreme distress, which seems the strongest reason for an unconditional reception.

BUT to return; if in the present conduct of this well-intended undertaking any defects appear; or if, in any instance, it is capable of improvement; gentlemen of knowledge, reputation and substance, who, to their own honour and the benefit of their fellow-creatures make a daily inspection into the concerns of this establishment, are extremely desirous

firous of rendering the good design beneficial to the utmost extent, that human affairs will admit.

WITH gratitude they receive all information and advice; and will execute, with care and fidelity, whatever is found practicable and advantageous.

'TIS now almost universally admitted, notwithstanding the impious efforts of a slavish philosophy in the last age, that MAN, by the circumstances of his own being, and the constitution of things about him, as well as the express instructions of Divine revelation, was designed and required by providence, to act under the agreeable character of a social creature: and that all the sons of *Adam* should consider themselves as branches of the same family; as parts of the same general body, and *members one of another*.

WITH no view can men be better connected together; for no purpose can a society be more usefully framed; or more agreeably to the intentions of the great Creator, our common Father, than to alleviate the distress and lessen the calamities to which fellow-creatures are subject: and the more severe and heavy these calamities are, and the less ability the
sufferers

sufferers have to rescue themselves ; the united endeavours of persons in a happier condition become still more laudable and beneficial : and every condescension, from a higher exaltation to the lowest degrees of misery, is justly intitled to a distinguished applause.

THERE is, moreover, another very agreeable circumstance that attends these social combinations. The various apprehensions of mankind, the different opinions entertained upon points of government and policy, as well as upon subjects of a higher nature, are too often apt to inflame the passions, create animosities, and produce, at best, a cold disregard ; sometimes, it is to be feared, much rage and fierceness : but this mutual intercourse in works of charity, smooths and rubs off these asperities. A joint labour of love, by uniting in some measure the views of different persons, forms a kind of friendly cement ; softens the angry passions, and abates that severe and harsh opinion, which men of disagreeing sentiments and views are too ready to entertain and propagate upon the whole character of one another : while the same earnest concurrence in such charitable works, an equal zeal to prosecute the same good designs, naturally create a better opinion of each other,

and afford just reason mutually to believe, that differences upon other matters do not take their rise from such bad principles, as are too often imputed by angry opponents : such united acts of charity and compassion publickly confute the narrow and suspicious query, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ?*

NOR should it be omitted, that the better to answer the benevolent purpose of this society, and conciliate more friendship among its members, no other distinction is observed in the reception and treatment of patients, than the reality and greatness of their distress.

SUCH is the constitution, and such the management of this excellent foundation ! And are arguments requisite to gain a favourable reception to a work so truly beneficent ! Can human nature need persuasion to encourage such a design ; or can a Christian require any importunity thus to obey and imitate his blessed Saviour, *who went about continually doing good, and healing all manner of sickness and diseases among the people ?* With what engaging force do religion and humanity, our reason and affections, generosity and justice, love to our fellow-creatures, love to our country, and love to ourselves ; the pleasure, the honour,

nour, the reward of such beneficence, all, plead the moving cause of so much innocent distress!

CAN the least doubt remain in any breast whether this pious and useful design, undertaken with disinterested compassion and conducted with great prudence, deserves approbation, or censure? whether an establishment, so helpful to the sore calamities of our fellow-creatures, should be generously encouraged, or totally destroyed? I speak it distinctly, totally destroyed—For those, who refuse a proper assistance, when it is in the power of their hand to grant it, declare aloud by such refusal—Let this design perish and come to nought.

NOT to support so humane an undertaking, is, to the extent of our power, to subvert it as effectually, as the with-holding food must prove fatal to an helpless infant.

INDIFFERENCE and disregard, or the smoother language of an empty applause, with kind wishes and good hopes that encouragement may arise elsewhere to support the useful project; what is all this, but aggravating the guilt of an avaricious and uncharitable mind? What is it, but publicly owning, we

ought to give, when we cruelly determine to grant no help?

VERY unwilling I am to suppose, that there can be an individual person so insensible of the misery of mankind; so regardless of a duty of the highest obligation: God forbid, that there should be one heart so wickedly obdurate; so void of all the affections of a man, all sense of religion as a Christian!

ARE the sorrows of these unhappy creatures less genuine, is their misery less grievous, because providence has kindly placed you in circumstances not conversant with such dreadful scenes of woe?

ATTEND these Hospitals; examine the mournful cases that offer; see what pitiable objects appear; such dismal spectacles as would pierce the hardest heart: 'tis not in human nature to be insensible of so much human misery.

BUT if your apprehension of the relief to be administered alleviates the horror of such sights in the Hospitals themselves, enter the wretched abodes, the dismal cellars and garrets, where both poverty and sickness dwell! Can you behold helpless children with their afflicted mother, shedding their un-
availing

availing tears around a meagre spectacle of pain and diseases ; crying for bread for themselves, and health to the once support of the family ! all their hearts fainting within them !

DID you behold but one such scene of misery (and God only knows how many such there are !) what tender emotions must it raise in your breasts ? would it not melt you into sorrow ? your heart, perhaps, would be still more sensibly touched, should you happen to reflect, that this misery, great as it is, might possibly proceed from laborious endeavours to gain a bare, a hard subsistence, by furnishing you with the accommodations of a plentiful and easy life ? If such concern should arise from a single instance ; how must this sympathy encrease from numbers ? how little able would you be to bear the sight of collected pain and anguish ; the hundreds, the thousands of these poor miserable beings tortured in their limbs, their bodies, with great variety of grievous and painful distempers ; however different in other sad complaints, all struggling with the heavy pressures of extreme want, utterly incapable to provide for their own relief, or even subsistence ! Sick and needy too ; *destitute, afflicted, tormented !*

COULD

COULD you hear the melancholy sound of bitter cries, the piercing groans of real distress ; could you see at once, all this deplorable collection of pain and torture, aggravated by the cutting anxieties of destitute poverty ; good God ! what a moving scene would this sad assemblage prove ! whose heart could bear the miserable sight ? what bowels would not melt ? whose eyes would not dissolve in tears ?

WHAT have you felt your selves ? what have you seen your friends, your children, endure under the severe anguish of an acute distemper ; or the languishing pains of a chronical and lasting disorder ? how afflictive, how tormenting have these sensations proved, though free from the dismal fears of perishing for want of necessaries !

RECOLLECT what you yourselves have suffered, even without the disadvantages of poverty ; when your sorrow was not like unto their sorrow : you will then much better *remember those that suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.* And being in the body, subject to the accidents and calamities of this changeable world, suppose yourself, or nearest relations, groaning at once under the united weight of sickness and indigence ;
and

and in the revolutions of providence how soon may that unhappy time appear? e'er long it will be the case; when you must want deliverance in time of trouble; what would you then wish should be done unto you? would you not then desire comfort and consolation?

SUCH acts of charity will yield the only consolation in seasons of sickness and distress; in all time of your tribulation. *Blessed is the man that considereth the sick and needy, the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble; the Lord comfort him when he lieth sick upon his bed: make thou all his bed in his sickness!*

THE present is, perhaps, the only opportunity we may ever enjoy of giving a public and generous testimony to a work so truly useful, so humane and christian.

Go to the house of mourning; or carry even your thoughts into the dismal chamber but of one dying man; dying for want of that kind assistance which you may now, and perhaps only now, administer! could you see the departing wretch, with eager wishful looks, praying for some friendly relief, but finding none; could you look upon the honest, poor, neglected creature, struggling with the agonies
of

of death; in anguish inexpressible, for want of timely help, breathing the last gasp of a miserable life; with what passion would you wish to have contributed, as you now may, to his health and preservation!

I can go no farther; God Almighty speak the rest to every christian heart—

THESE poor people cannot recompence you; but you will be recompenced at the resurrection of the just.



Such Persons therefore as are inclined to encourage and promote so laudable a work, are desired to send their Subscriptions or Benefactions, to Mr. Thomas Minors, Banker, in Lombard-street, who will give proper Receipts for the same: And any Person inclined by his last Will to bequeath a Legacy to this Charity, is desired to direct it to be paid to the Treasurer for the Time being, of the LONDON INFIRMARY in Goodman's Fields, and that his Receipt shall be a good discharge for the same.

